

REMARKS**Section 112**

The Applicant has amended the claims to eliminate the ambiguity cited by the Examiner with respect to 35 U.S.C. §112.

Section 103

The Applicant has amended all the independent claims, which has effectively amended all claims pending in the application. In the process of reviewing the Examiner's most recent rejections and formulating a response thereto, the Applicant came to realize that the desired amendments would likely define two patentably distinct inventions. Accordingly, one category of claims will be pursued in the current application and the other will be filed in a divisional application.

In the first category of claims, a separate mold is used to infuse the strands with liquid potting compound. The infused portion is then removed from the separate mold while the potting compound is still in the liquid state. The infused portion is then placed within the internal passage of a separate anchor. The potting compound then transitions to a solid, locking the strands within the anchor. This first category includes claims 1-10, 13-19, and 22 (as they existed prior to the current amendments).

The second category of claims contemplates the use of the anchor itself as one-half of the mold. The unwetted strands are placed within the anchor's internal passage. A separate injector then clamps against the anchor's open end and seals it. Pressurized liquid potting compound is then forced into the strands. The liquid potting compound transitions to a solid and locks the strands to the anchor. This second category includes claims 11-12 and 20-21. The second

category represents the claims selected for continued prosecution in this application. The first category of claims will be the subject of a divisional application.

The process described in the present incarnations of claims 11-12 and 20-21 may be generally described as follows (with FIGs. 9-11 being instructive):

1. Providing an exposed region of strands on a cable (such as element (16) in FIG. 1);
2. Providing an anchor with an internal passage and an open end (such as element (18) in FIG. 10 – in which all the elements are shown sectioned in half);
3. Placing the unwetted strands within the anchor's internal passage (as shown in FIG. 10);
4. Providing a separate injector (element (46) in FIG. 10);
5. Clamping the separate injector against the anchor's open end in order to seal it (FIG. 11);
6. Injecting pressurized liquid potting compound into the strands in order to thoroughly infuse the strands.

Some embodiments have a needle (FIGs. 9, 10 and 11) while others do not (FIG. 9B). For those versions incorporating a needle, it is preferable to withdraw the injector while the potting compound is still in the liquid state (since the needle may become stuck). For those versions not using the needle, removing the injector prior to the potting compound hardening is still preferable.

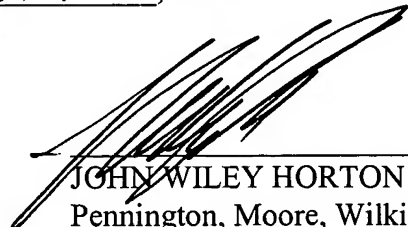
It should be borne in mind that the remaining claims in the present application concern a method for attaching an anchor to a cable. They do not describe a molding process per se.

Rather, they describe the use of a form of molding to accomplish the objective of attaching the anchor to the strands. The prior art references neither teach nor suggest the combination of elements now claimed. An important distinction is the use of a separate injector unit which is clamped to the anchor's open end in order to seal it. The creation of the seal allows the liquid potting compound to be injected into the strands under pressure.

The prior art method of infusing the strands is best illustrated in U.S. Pat No. 3,660,887 to Davis (1972). FIG. 1 of this previously cited patent shows the use of an anchor-like structure as a form of a mold. A liquid is then poured into the "anchor's" open end. As explained in the original disclosure, the strands of synthetic cables are very fine. Many desired potting compounds will not sufficiently penetrate into the gaps between the strands if the compound is poured in and allowed to penetrate under the influence of gravity alone. The use of pressurized injection solves this problem. All the pending claims now incorporate this limitation.

Applicant believes that the Claims are now in condition for allowance, and respectfully requests the Examiner to reconsider the application.

Respectfully submitted this 16th day of Dec., 2006.



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